

News Release



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Arkansas to Receive \$4 Million to Expand Apprenticeship Opportunities

LITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Department of Workforce Services will receive \$4 million from the U.S. Department of Labor to fund the Arkansas Apprenticeship Pathway Initiative, which will expand apprenticeship programs in high-growth and high-tech industries including health care, information technology and advanced manufacturing.

“AAPI will help build a lasting infrastructure for apprenticeship opportunities in Arkansas,” said ADWS Director Daryl Bassett. “This initiative will help us establish a system that effectively utilizes a network of businesses, training providers, service organizations and state agencies that will help both employers and job seekers succeed in today’s economy.”

Through this initiative, ADWS will connect 600 Arkansans over the next five years to high-quality apprenticeships that will provide participants with the knowledge and skills they need to attain good-paying jobs that are available now. Participants will also earn college credit upon completion of an apprenticeship program. These earn-while-you-learn training opportunities will be targeted toward dislocated, underemployed, unemployed and underrepresented individuals.

ADWS is one of 46 grantees that will receive an American Apprenticeship Grant from the U.S. DOL. To ensure AAPI is employer driven, ADWS has collaborated with businesses like Baxter Healthcare Corporation and TrinityRail Maintenance Services in the design and development of the apprenticeships. Already 20 businesses have committed to hire and train participants of the program.

Other partners include Arkansas Apprenticeship Coalition, Arkansas Community Colleges (formerly Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges), and Winrock International. Additionally, the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce, Arkansas Aerospace Alliance, Arkansas STEM Coalition, and the Workforce Training Consortium have pledged their support.

To learn more about AAPI, contact ADWS Discretionary Grants Coordinator Lisa Ferrell at 501.371.1024 or Lisa.Ferrell@arkansas.gov. For a complete listing of the entities receiving funding from this U.S. DOL program and the award amounts, go to:

<http://www.dol.gov/opa/media/press/eta/ETA20151762.htm>.

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